

Q&A – Online Scholarship Searches and Scams
High School Financial Aid Update Workshop
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What is the best scholarship search engine that you would recommend? Recently Fastweb did not receive a good report as published in *Newsweek*.

It is recommended that a student first check the free scholarship search sites, and use more than one so results can be compared. www.Finaid.org is a place to start. Specifically, this link on the Finaid.org site offers Fastweb and additional free sites. Go to <http://www.finaid.org/scholarships/other.phtml>.

Are there any valid scholarship services that charge a processing fee, or is it still wise to avoid such services?

Typically, it is better to avoid the scholarship search services that charge a processing fee. The databases contain many of the same scholarship and grant listings. Persistence is the recommended cost.

The best source for finding out whether or not a scholarship search service that charges has come under scrutiny for their business practices is to go to the Federal Trade Commission's Website www.ftc.org. The site provides a list of businesses relative to student financial assistance that were cited by the FTC for fraudulent operations. Another source to check is the Better Business Bureau at www.bbb.org.

Each year the U.S. Attorney General, the Secretary of Education and the Federal Trade Commission must submit a report on the incidence of fraud by businesses or individuals marketing financial aid assistance services to consumers. This report is a requirement of the College Scholarship Fraud Prevention Act of 2000, Pub. L. 106-420, 114 Stat. 1867. The Act established stricter sentencing guidelines for criminal financial aid fraud.

Information pertaining to scholarship searches and scams can be found in the *Paying for College in Michigan* publication or online at www.michigan.gov/studentaid.